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# FIVE DEAD MEN

Whom I Knew when Living :

ROBERT OWEN, JOSEPH MAZZINI, CHARLES  
SUMNER, J. S. MILL, & LEDRU ROLLIN.

BY

CHARLES BRADLAUGH.



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# FIVE DEAD MEN WHOM I KNEW WHEN LIVING.

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IN selecting as the subject for a lecture "Five Dead Men Whom I Knew when They were Living"—Robert Owen, Joseph Mazzini, John Stuart Mill, Charles Sumner, and Alexandre Auguste Ledru Rollin—I do not mean more than that the accidents of my chequered life, having thrown me into contact with these men, I take their lives for the lessons such lives give, without either pretending to maintain their several views, or to imply that all, or either of, the five are, or is, in any fashion identified with my own advanced opinions, except where such identity shall be expressly stated. Naturally, the compass of a lecture is prohibitive of any biographic detail, or of any completeness of statement of the respective teachings of the men I briefly deal with.

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## I.—ROBERT OWEN.

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ROBERT OWEN, the great advocate of English Socialism, was born at Newtown, a Montgomeryshire village, on the 14th May, 1771. His early life-struggles—his rapid, but sober and business-like, conquest of that wealth which the world worships so much, but to which he seems to have attached little value, except as it gave him facilities for spreading his views—are familiar enough. It is at New Lanark, in 1797, and thenceforth for twenty years, that one would wish to show Robert Owen, for if he had never done

aught outside New Lanark, he did enough there alone to win grateful recollection. Surrounding the factory workers in his employment with humanising conditions, ameliorating their position, he made the wage-winners something more than mere human machines. [Recognising that it was easier to bend and mould the tendencies of the child than to break the long-acquired habit of the grown man or woman, Robert Owen set an example to all Britain] by introducing infant schools in his New Lanark village. [It was Robert Owen who practically demonstrated that the child's mind is a sheet of paper, varying in colour, quality, and size, but which cannot be left blank ; it must be ornamented or disfigured, fact or falsehood must be written on it.] It was Robert Owen who gave an example which might be followed with advantage by teetotal advocates. He made New Lanark a sober village, not so much by denouncing drink, as by providing home inducements and evening amusements which outrivalled the beer-shop or whisky store. Many an unfortunate man, returning to his overcrowded unwholesome dwelling, wearied with his toil, finds that it is foul with the breath of so many huddled together, and he consequently escapes to the glare of the gin palace or the gathering at the beerhouse to fly from the misery he finds at home. It is true that he thus aggravates the ill, but we cannot make men sober unless we purify their lives, unless the domestic hearth has its charms and enticements for them ; what we want is, that the workers shall have a dwelling to go to from their work which has in it the real tokens of comfort, purity, and health of life. No four-leaved shamrock, nor magician's wand, could have even been supposed to effect so great a transformation as the persistent Humanitarianism of this earnest Robert Owen effected at New Lanark. His doctrines on the formation of character have found practical and authoritative expression more recently in the law-established reformatory schools. Instead of trampling juvenile criminals still lower into the earth, society now adopts the view which Robert Owen was the first to popularise—although not the first to enunciate—that man is better or worse according to the conditions surrounding the parent previous to the birth of the child, and those which surround the infant itself during its childhood, and accompany the boy or girl during youth. Young criminals are now sought to be made less criminal by being placed for lengthy periods under conditions which shall modify and improve their characters.



In 1817 Robert Owen—who had up to this time been regarded by fashionable society as an amiable but eccentric philanthropist, whose whims were to be pardoned on account of his wealth—startled all England by his famous declaration at the London Tavern. Impeaching the religions of the world, he aroused against him all the clergy, and frightened away most of his titled admirers. It has been the custom of late years for street-corner tub-thumpers—utterly incapable of imitating Owen's unselfish devotion to human improvement—to malign Robert Owen's name, and to cast all kinds of opprobrious epithets against his life. Undoubtedly Robert Owen furnished some cause to his foes, when he declared in his London Tavern speech that all the religions of the world were founded in error. And yet every religious man will contend that all the religions of the world save one, and that one his own, are false. It is said, too, that the doctrine that man is the creature of circumstances involves a theory of fatalism demoralising to the human character. Those who take ground against Mr. Owen overlook the fact that it is better to teach the truth, whatever that truth may be, so that the knowledge may furnish the motive for the selection of improving conditions. Nor is man a merely passive figure to be acted on; he re-acts and modifies his surroundings, improving or aggravating them and their effects. As each drop of water is to the ocean, so is each human unit to the world—part of the great whole, from which it cannot escape, and from which it cannot be eliminated. Freewill theorists delude themselves with empty words when they claim for the phenomena of volition that they are outside all law. The formula that man's character is formed for him, and not by him, does not express all the truth, but it expresses much more than is taught by those whose dogma it is that man may will, uninfluenced by events. Robert Owen has been too fiercely assailed for his views on marriage, those who are his assailants, forgetting how much the laws affecting woman's position and property, and regarding divorce, have been modified during the last fifty years. The marriage question is one hedged round with huge difficulties. In Roman Catholic countries extreme harshness forbids all divorce. In some States of the American Republic great facilities are given for determining a contract, which holds by force of law only, against the desire of each. Human passion enters too much with some into the consideration of this question, and is too utterly excluded by

others. It is chiefly as the inaugurator of the English Socialist Propaganda that Robert Owen will be remembered. No Socialist myself, I yet cannot but concede that the movement had an enormous value, if only as a protest against that terrible and inhuman competitive struggle, in which the strong were rewarded for their strength, and no mercy was shown to the weakest. I am probably too much of an individualist to judge a system fairly which seems to me to neutralise individual effort; but it is only necessary to look to the enormously beneficial results of co-operative effort in the North of England, in order to affirm that the Socialist Missionaries, with good old Robert Owen at their head, have left proud monuments of the effect of their teachings. If any early reconciliation is possible, as I believe it is, between the owners of accumulated capital and the vendors of labour, it must come by the enlightenment which efforts at co-operative manufacturing give to all those who take part in them. The war between capitalists and workers is an insane and suicidal war, aggravated because the rights of life are too often made secondary to the privileges of wealth. Robert Owen's Socialism was the utterance of one of the many efforts to give life and dignity to labour. Honour, then, his human effort, even if you deny his dogma. I first saw Robert Owen as a Sunday evening lecturer on the platform of the old John-street Institution, about 1848, and it was from the same platform, ten years later, that it became my duty, in consequence of the ill-health of Robert Cooper, to read for Mr. Owen the last speech he ever prepared for delivery at a Freethought meeting. No one, friend or foe, could come in contact with Robert Owen without being most thoroughly convinced of the old man's complete conviction of the accuracy of his views on society, and of his full certainty to the very last that those views would all be realised at no distant date. He was a good, pure, one-ideal man, whose long life, from its prime to its close, was one never-ceasing struggle to soften the world's harsh conflict, and to create a new moral world for after-livers.

## II.—JOSEPH MAZZINI.

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GIUSEPPE MAZZINI, the untiring preacher of Italian Republican unity, was born at Genoa on June 22nd, 1805 : and he tells us it was in April, 1821, just after the unsuccessful Piedmontese insurrection, that he was first impressed with the idea "that we Italians could, and therefore ought to, struggle for the liberty of our country." When about twenty-two years of age Mazzini commenced his literary career by writing brief book notices for a mercantile journal at Genoa, which journal he made sufficiently political to at length bring down upon it a Government decree of suspension. Vetoed in Genoa by the Sardinian authorities, Mazzini, in a second journal, braved more openly the Tuscan Government at Leghorn ; but, after about twelve months, the *Indicatore Livornese*, as the new journal was called, was also suppressed. Induced by his new political associates, Mazzini joined the Carbonari, a secret association, in which the police had usually—as is commonly the case in secret political organisations—sufficient members to betray the whole of the plans of the Society. Betrayed and arrested in 1830, Mazzini was confined for some months in the Fortress of Savona, whence he was ultimately released—the formal evidence against him failing—but was exiled, because the Government were only too sure of his Republican tendencies.

It was while a solitary prisoner in Savona that Joseph Mazzini conceived the plan of *La Giovina Italia* (Society of Young Italy). Intensely national, Mazzini believed that "regenerated Italy was destined to arise the *initiatrice* of a new life, and a new and powerful unity to all the nations of Europe." It is doubtful whether the movements of the Southern and Northern races in Europe have not a distinctness of character which must always be fatal to Mazzini's conception of the rôle of Italy. Mazzini rightfully asserted the unity of Italy ; but Italian intellect is too poetic and too subtle to be the guide of some of the less musical, but not less thorough, politics of the Teutonic races. From

Italy Mazzini went to Lyons, and in 1831 he joined a forlorn expedition into Corsica, intending to cross thence into the Romagna, where an insurrectionary rising was planned. This expedition failing, Mazzini took up his residence at Marseilles, where he formally founded the Society of Young Italy, to create "an Italy, one, free, and powerful; independent of all foreign supremacy, and morally worthy of her great mission." The statutes declared "Young Italy is Republican and Unitarian. Republican, because theoretically every nation is destined, by the law of God and humanity, to form a free and equal community of brothers; and the Republican is the only form of government that ensures this future. Because all true sovereignty resides essentially in the nation, the sole progressive and continuous interpreter of the supreme moral law. Because, whatever be the form of privilege that constitutes the apex of the social edifice, its tendency is to spread among the other classes, and, by undermining the equality of the citizens, to endanger the liberty of the country. Because, when the sovereignty is recognised as existing, not in the whole body, but in several distinct powers, the path to usurpation is laid open, and the struggle for supremacy between these powers is inevitable; distrust and organised hostility take the place of harmony, which is society's law of life. Because the Monarchical element, being incapable of sustaining itself alone by the side of the popular element, it necessarily involves the existence of the intermediate element of an aristocracy—the source of inequality and corruption to the whole nation. Because both history and the nature of things teach us that Elective Monarchy tends to generate anarchy, and Hereditary Monarchy tends to generate despotism. Because when Monarchy is not, as in the Middle Ages, based upon the belief now extinct in right divine, it becomes too weak to be a bond of unity and authority in the State.....Young Italy is Unitarian, because without unity there is no true nation; because without unity there is no real strength.....The means," say the statutes, "by which Young Italy proposes to reach its aim are—education and insurrection, to be adopted simultaneously, and made to harmonise with each other. Education must ever be directed to teach by example, word, and pen, the necessity of insurrection. Insurrection, whenever it can be realised, must be so conducted as to render it a means of national education."

It is a little difficult, when Mazzini teaches that "insurrection, by means of guerilla bands, is the true method of warfare," to understand how guerilla warfare and educational progress can be consistent. Guerilla warfare is so nearly allied to—and so often results in—mere brigandage that the certain evil seems greater than any possible advantage; and, as a matter of fact, history has most clearly shown that these guerilla bands are more effective for mischief on the enemy than for good to the cause on behalf of which they are arrayed. Mazzini himself teaches that "Great revolutions are the work rather of principles than of bayonets, and are achieved first in the moral, and then in the material sphere." In the programme of Young Italy Joseph Mazzini, who was bitterly opposed to what he called Materialism, affirmed that "the reformation of a people rests upon no sure foundation, unless based upon agreement in religious belief." He declared that "the doctrines of Materialism disinherit man of every noble aim, and abandon him to the arbitrary rule of chance or blind force." Joseph Mazzini was, at the same time, devotedly Republican and religious. He blended his piety with his politics, and regarded Republicanism as God-ordained.

Exile, and some sorrow beyond—a sorrow which he alludes to, but does not state—had given a tone of sadness to his life. Tenacious of purpose, he was fit to be the mainspring of a secret society, but hardly so fitted to be the conductor of any open movement where his views would be subject to contradiction or criticism from his co-workers. He was grandly thorough in his Republicanism, but he dreamed it for the working men of Italy before he knew what those working men were; and although he made great efforts to educate the people, he never seems to have recognised the fact that the proclamation of a Republic to a people of whom the majority are not prepared for it, is but a small step towards real Republicanism. In Rome he was—when invested with authority—so roughly brought face to face with the bitter truth, that he says "it was put to the vote whether we should not resign our charge the day following. The population, in consequence of the long corruption of slavery, was ignorant and idle; distrustful and suspicious of all things and of all men."

The extension of the propaganda of the Young Italy became rapidly so formidable, that on the representation of the Italian Government, the French authorities, in August,

1832, ordered Mazzini to quit Marseilles, but the order was rendered inoperative by the extraordinary ability with which Mazzini eluded the police, and yet continued most actively his revolutionary work, so that, by the middle of 1833, the Society of Young Italy had become widely extended, if not powerful, through Lombardy, the Genoese territory, Tuscany, and the Roman States. Treason from some, and incaution on the part of others, giving the Government a clue as to the members of the society, many were arrested and put to death.

Mazzini could not help feeling deeply his own share, as the founder of the Association, in the deaths of his co-workers. Four years afterwards he says: "I feel myself a criminal—conscious of guilt, yet incapable of expiation. The forms of those shot at Alessandria and Chambery rose up before me like the phantoms of a crime, and its unavailing remorse. I could not recall them to life. How many mothers had I caused to weep? How many more must learn to weep should I persist in the attempt to arouse the youth of Italy to noble action, to awaken in them the yearning for a common country? And if that country were indeed an illusion, whence had I derived the right of judging for the future, and urging hundreds, thousands of men, to the sacrifice of themselves, and of all that they held most dear?"

Early in February, 1834, an abortive attempt was made to take a column of insurgents, under the command of General Ramorino, into Italy from Geneva. In this column Joseph Mazzini, although the contriver of the expedition, marched as a private soldier. Treachery on the part of the General, and inefficient means of action, caused the failure of the plan; and the defeat almost made Mazzini despair of his whole mission.

The Swiss authorities—compelled by the representations of the European Powers—seized the war stores of the Italian exiles, and menaced themselves with expulsion.

In Berne, where he then took refuge, Mazzini projected the formation of the Society of Young Europe, a combination of Young Italy with two kindred associations, called Young Poland and Young Germany. The ideal of the Association of Young Europe was the federal association of European Democracy under one sole direction; so that any nation rising in insurrection should at once find the others ready to assist it. To this organisation, later in 1834, was

added the new Society of Young Switzerland. Writing of Switzerland, Mazzini says : " Since January 1st, 1338, that little people has had neither king nor master. It presents the spectacle—unique in Europe—of a Republican flag floating for five centuries above the Alps, although surrounded by jealous and invading Monarchies, as if to be an incitement and a presage to us all. Charles V., Louis XIV., Napoleon, passed away, but that banner remained sacred and immoveable." The Constitution of the Swiss Republic was regarded by Mazzini as specially defective, in that its Diet, or Central Government, is composed of delegates from each Canton, chosen in each case by the grand *conseil* of the Canton, instead of being directly elected by the people. Mazzini also objected that in the Swiss Diet each Canton has but one vote, irrespective of size, or population, or taxation contribution ; and he further objected to the *mandat impératif*, or special instruction to the delegate, as nullifying all spontaneity of thought and conscience. Mazzini justified the Association of Young Europe by affirming that " Liberty is an European right. Arbitrary power, tyranny, and inequality cannot exist in one nation without injury to others." In the middle of 1835 " Young Switzerland " had its journal, *La Jeune Suisse*, and a printing press at Bienne, in the Canton of Berne. The European Governments used considerable pressure to prevent the little Swiss Republic from being continued as the centre for this Republican work, and ultimately a *conclusum* of the Swiss Diet, in 1836, condemned Mazzini to perpetual exile from Switzerland.

In January, 1837, the great Italian conspirator arrived in London. This was a gloomy period in Mazzini's life ; exiled, poor, doubting, and doubted, it seemed to himself almost as if his young life had been an utter failure. England gives the shelter of its land to the political exile, but it is a cold shelter if he be a poor or an unknown man ; and, until Mazzini's pen had won for him a position amongst English writers, he often knew the extremest bitterness of want. Joseph Mazzini found, too, that although the English nation gave nominal protection to his person, the English Government nevertheless was guilty of the baseness of opening his correspondence, and communicating the contents to foreign powers. That Austria utilised the information communicated to her by Lord Aberdeen's Government, which had tampered with letters addressed to Mazzini by

the unfortunate Brothers Bandiera, is now a matter of history. Writing eighteen years later, Mazzini said: "The secret of correspondence is violated in the English Post Office at the present day, precisely as it was in 1844, though perhaps somewhat more rarely." It is certain that in the Irish Post Office letters have been opened by authority during the last few years; and it is also certain that secret police reports have, within the last five years, been furnished in writing by the London Detective Department to the Paris Police. Whether letters are still opened at St. Martin's-le-Grand I have no sufficient means of determining.

The political volcano of 1847-8, shook severely several of the Italian princedoms, and Joseph Mazzini returned to Italy to take part in the struggle which overturned, at any rate temporarily, more than one ducal throne.

On February 9th, 1849—the Pope having fled, and Rome being without any Government—a constituent assembly, chosen by a very large popular vote, and of which Mazzini had been elected member, proclaimed a Republic in Rome. On March 29th, Mazzini, Saffi, and Armellini, were chosen Triumvirs; and on April 25th, the French Republic disgraced itself by landing an army, under General Oudinot, at Civita Vecchia. The story of the siege of Rome, of its heroic defence by Joseph Garibaldi, of its fall at last in July, is too well known to need repeating at length, and is too grand to be pressed into one or two lines. Rome fell, and in July Mazzini was once more a fugitive from his loved Italy.

In 1857 Mazzini endeavoured to organise a general Italian insurrection, and went to Genoa himself to take his part; but although detached risings took place in various parts of Italy, the differences of opinion between the leaders, such as Mazzini, Manin, and Garibaldi, were so great, and the people were so unprepared, that another failure had to be chronicled. Mazzini opposed himself bitterly to the diplomacy of Cavour, who was then endeavouring, chiefly through Prince Jerome Napoleon, to obtain the alliance of France against Austria.

In 1858 Mazzini penned the following words on woman, worthy reproduction, alike from their great merit, and as chronicling this phase of his faith: "Love and respect woman. Seek in her, not merely a comfort, but a force, an inspiration, the redoubling of your intellectual and moral faculties. Cancel from your minds every idea of superiority over her. You have none whatever.....Long prejudice, an



inferior education, and a perennial legal inequality and injustice, have created that apparent intellectual inferiority which has been converted into an argument of continued oppression. But does not the history of oppression teach us how the oppressor ever seeks his justification and support by appealing to a fact of his own creation? The feudal castes that withheld education from the sons of the people, excluded them on the ground of that very want of education from the rights of the citizen, from the sanctuary wherein laws are framed, and from that right of vote which is the initiation of the social mission.....Consider woman as the partner and companion, not merely of your joys and sorrows, but of your thoughts, your aspirations, your studies, and your endeavours after social amelioration. Consider her your equal in your civil and political life."

Mazzini and Mill were alike eloquent pleaders for womanhood, and each deserve woman's tribute of grateful memory.

In 1859 the brain of Mazzini and the arm of Garibaldi effectually moved the peoples of Sicily and Naples, and rousing even the lazzaroni from their lethargy, frightened away Bomba from his Neapolitan Palace. Mazzini and Garibaldi then took entirely different ground, and bitterness arose, which was never cleared away. Mazzini desired Garibaldi to hold the Two Sicilies as Republican, and to strike a blow at Rome for the unity of Italy, while Joseph Garibaldi consented to the annexation of Naples and Sicily to Piedmont, under the rule of Victor Emanuel, and returned to his island home at Caprera, satisfied that his country had advanced one step to the unity, which he, equally with Mazzini, so ardently desired.

It was shortly before this date that I first saw Joseph Mazzini, at his modest lodgings, in Onslow Terrace, Brompton, where he then lived under the name of Signor Ernesti. He was one of the few men who impress you first, and always, with the thorough truthfulness and incorruptibility of their natures. Simple in his manners, with only one luxury, his cigar, he had that fulness of faith in his cause which is so contagious, and by the sheer force of personal contact he made believers in the possibility of Italian Unity even among those who were utter strangers to his thought and hope.

In 1865 the city of Messina elected Mazzini as Deputy to the Italian Parliament; but he refused to take his seat in an Assembly where he would have had to take the oath of allegiance to Victor Emanuel. He said, "Monarchy will

never number me amongst its servants or followers. I dedicate myself wholly, and for ever, to constitute Italy one free, independent, Republican nation. I have lived, I live, and I shall die a Republican, bearing witness to my faith to the last."

When in 1870 Mazzini set foot in Sicily, the Government arrested him, and sent him to Gaeta. A general protest went out through Europe, and the imprisonment was not of long duration, but it was yet enough to weaken the already diminished vitality of the oft-disappointed conspirator for Italian Republican Unity.

On the 10th March, 1872, at Pisa, where, under an assumed English name, he had passed five months in almost complete solitude, Joseph Mazzini died; worn out in body and spirit by the forty years' never-ceasing toil for the liberty and unity of his much-loved native land. At his funeral 80,000 men and women met to testify to his truth, to mourn his death. Sentences of death and exile stood unrevoked against him while living. Italy, from that Rome which Mazzini had defended, could not enforce these penal sentences, but it was only her dead son she honoured. Living, she let his broken heart bear undiminished the sorrows of his intense struggle. Dead, a whole population witnessed that the liberty-lesson his life had taught would bear its fruits now the white-haired teacher could no longer use his pen. In seven-hilled Rome a laurel crown was placed by Italy's hand on the head which had bowed to earth in the mighty effort to teach Italia's children how to compass the freedom of their birth-land.

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### III.—JOHN STUART MILL.

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To record the mere life of John Stuart Mill would present little of lasting interest, especially as Mr. Mill never seems to have sought to use his official knowledge of Indian affairs to govern his conduct as a practical politician, after his connection with the East India Company had been

determined. It is not so much how he lived as what he thought, not so much what he did as what he taught, that is worth remembering. Born May 20th, 1806, and dying May, 1873, he probably, during the last twenty-five years of his life, influenced more than any other man, the various thinkers in England and America. As a political economist, a logician, a politician, a metaphysician, the exponent of Utilitarianism, and advocate of woman's rights, he stands in all phases remarkable, in some without superior. In political economy it is his merit to have popularised amongst the people a science which had been generally regarded by artisans as cold and hard, only to be used by the rich against the poor; and it is noteworthy that Mr. Mill won his popularity despite his steadfast maintenance of the Malthusian theory of the law of population.

Mr. Mill clearly distinguished between the laws of production of wealth, which are real "laws of nature," dependent on the properties of objects, and the modes of the distribution of wealth, which, subject to certain conditions, depend on the human will. In this he differed from those who pretend that the distribution of wealth is determined by economic laws, which are incapable of being temporarily defeated or modified by human effort.

As a politician, Mr. Mill affirmed that women were entitled to representation on the same terms with men. He supported Mr. Thomas Hare's scheme for obtaining a more perfect representation of minorities; and, whether or not Mr. Hare's proposal shall ever be embodied in a statutory form, Republicans should remember that thorough respect can never be shown to the decisions of the majority unless the minority are afforded a fair occasion to be heard on all important questions. It is right that the majority should decide, but only on condition that the voice of the minority has full utterance prior to the delivery of the final award. Mr. Mill opposed the ballot, and I avow that I should be pleased if voters could be true and self-reliant enough to dispense with the protection it affords.

Admitting "the irresistible claim of every man and woman to be consulted, and to be allowed a voice in the regulation of the affairs which vitally concern them," Mr. Mill desired to give a plurality of votes to "proved superiority of education," in order to secure "the superiority of weight justly due to opinions grounded on superiority of knowledge."

In his *Political Economy* Mr. Mill had taught that the

right of freehold proprietorship in land could only be maintained subject to the duty of cultivation ; and late in life, as the President of the Land Tenure Reform Association, he propounded a scheme by which the unearned augmentation of rent was to be applied otherwise than to the private aggrandisement of the landlord. The land question in England is yet to become a battle question, serious in character, and uncertain as to its method of solution. Only one thing is certain—viz., that thousands must not be allowed to continue to grow poor and wretched, in order that a few dozen persons may become unfairly, as well as enormously, rich.

In the great American struggle Mr. Mill regarded the course of the Southerners, in all its stages, as “an aggressive enterprise of the slave-owners to extend the territory of slavery, under the combined influences of pecuniary interest, domineering temper, and the fanaticism of a class for its class privileges ;” and, therefore, when the upper and middle classes in England expressed pro-Southern views, Mr. Mill arrayed himself with the artisan classes of England on the side of the North.

In philosophy, Mr. Mill affirmed that “the prevailing tendency to regard all the marked distinctions of the human character as innate, and in the main indelible, and to ignore the irresistible proofs that by far the greater part of those differences, whether between individuals, races, or sexes, are such as not only might, but naturally would, be produced by differences in circumstances, is one of the chief hindrances to the rational treatment of great social questions, and one of the greatest stumbling-blocks to human improvement.” While describing himself, in the Autobiography published since his death, as one who never had a religious belief, John Stuart Mill was, unfortunately, taught that his heretical opinions “could not prudently be avowed to the world.” Now, it is true, he affirms that the time appears to have come in religious matters “when it is the duty of all who, being qualified in point of knowledge, have, on mature consideration, satisfied themselves that the current opinions are not only false, but hurtful,” to make their dissent known ; “and,” he adds, “the world would be astonished if it knew how great a proportion of its brightest ornaments—of those most distinguished even in popular estimation for wisdom and virtue—are complete sceptics in religion.”

The effect of Mr. Mill's early teaching is manifested by

a reticence which pervades his writings ; a reticence often liable to be utterly misunderstood. Three essays, published since his death—in which the subjects he specially refrained from discussing are treated at some length—make us more completely regret that his silence during life leaves his posthumous utterances, if not contradictory, at any rate deficient in that clearness for which his ordinary writings are so remarkable. Perhaps the most distinct declarations from Mr. Mill's pen, published during his lifetime, were : first, the one in which, in his review of Hamilton, he declared it to be profoundly immoral to teach, with Dean Mansel, that it is man's duty to worship "a being whose moral attributes are affirmed to be unknowable by us, and to be, perhaps, extremely different from those which, when we are speaking of our fellow creatures, we call by the same names." Mill says : "If, instead of the 'glad tidings' that there exists a being in whom all the excellences which the highest human mind can conceive, exist in a degree inconceivable to us, I am informed that the world is ruled by a being whose attributes are infinite, but what they are we cannot learn, nor what are the principles of his government, except that 'the highest human morality which we are capable of conceiving,' does not sanction them ; convince me of it, and I will bear my fate as I may. But when I am told that I must believe this, and at the same time call this being by the names which express and affirm the highest human morality, I say in plain terms that I will not. Whatever power such a being may have over me, there is one thing which he shall not do—he shall not compel me to worship him. I will call no being good, who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow creatures ; and if such a being can sentence me to hell for not so calling him, to hell I will go." The other is in the review of Comte : "Candid persons of all creeds may be willing to admit, that if a person has an ideal object, his attachment and sense of duty towards which are able to control and discipline all his other sentiments and propensities, and prescribe to him a rule of life, that person has a religion ; and though every one naturally prefers his own religion to any other, all must admit that if the object of this attachment, and of this feeling of duty, is the aggregate of our fellow-creatures, this Religion of the Infidel cannot, in honesty and conscience, be called an intrinsically bad one."

Occasionally, as in the essay on Utilitarianism, there are

passages in Mr. Mill's writings which a Christian would probably read as meaning more than Mr. Mill intended to convey; and in the two last essays of the latest volume there are several positions conflicting seriously with the ground taken in the first essay.

In 1861, when I fought the authorities at Devonport on the question of the right of meeting, Mr. John Stuart Mill, with whom I had up to that time held no communication, sent me a cheque for £25 towards the heavy costs I then incurred; and in 1868, for reasons which he has himself stated towards the close of his Autobiography, he also subscribed towards the expenses of my election struggle at Northampton.

To show how even his opponents can speak of him, I give the following extract from an official lecturer of the Christian Evidence Society, Mr. W. R. Browne, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge :—" John Stuart Mill was one of the keenest, the clearest, the most influential thinkers of his day. He was also a man much beloved by his friends (Heaven forbid that I should stint a word that can be uttered in praise of the dead!), devoted to the welfare of his fellow-men, regular and temperate in his life, honest, upright, sincere; and he was an utter unbeliever in any form of religion whatsoever. This fault, which was tolerably well known in his lifetime, is made perfectly clear and certain by the volume before us. He was all that I have described, morally and intellectually, either in consequence of, or in spite of, his rejection of all that Christians hold true and sacred. Which of these is the case? There can be no denying that, at first sight, his life makes against the party of religion. I know that it has been felt to be so by many; I have felt it to some extent myself. Can that be true which a thinker so careful and so brilliant—the greatest master, in this age at least, of the science of logic and the laws of evidence—pronounced unhesitatingly to be false?"

Mr. Mill's almost sudden death at Avignon was mourned as a national bereavement. As an able writer in the *Daily News* wrote in the obituary notice, "the full measure of his political influence will not be known until the next generation, when the younger men, who of late, at Oxford and the other seats of learning, have drunk in his doctrines, come in their turn to the front, and assume the task of shaping the nation's destinies."

## IV.—CHARLES SUMNER.

ENGLISHMEN need to be reminded that slavery was a vice instituted and fostered in the American colonies by aristocratic and monarchical England. Efforts made by various colonies to check the slave trade were rebuked by the English Government. The barbarism of slavery was the enduring legacy to the West from civilised and Christian England. In the Federation of the United States the right of holding slaves was retained, amongst other State rights, by the Southern States.

As the Republic grew, two hostile elements were distinctly manifested—the one for the abolition, the other for the extension, of the slave power. In 1844 Texas was annexed to the United States by the influence of the Southern members of Congress, and the vast extent of Texan territory promised the Slave States the command of the Gulf of Mexico, and their preponderance as a political party. It was on this occasion that Charles Sumner—known theretofore as a cultivated, eloquent, and rapidly-rising Massachusetts barrister—made his first distinct stand on the side of freedom against slavery. In November, 1845, in a speech in Faneuil Hall against the admission to the Union of Texas as a Slave State, Sumner said: “God forbid that the votes and voices of the freemen of the North should help to bind anew the fetter of the slave.” From thenceforward, until the day of his death, Charles Sumner never wavered in the course he had chosen.

Dealing with the matter with the reverence for law, natural to one trained as he had been, Charles Sumner challenged the slaveholders on constitutional grounds; urging that the provisions of the United States constitution, in favour of slaveholding, were merely temporary, and were framed in the expectation that the slave traffic would be abandoned at no distant period. He affirmed that the Congress could, even then, by express legislation, abolish slavery in the district of Columbia, and in any territories; that it could abolish the slave trade on the high seas between the States; and that it could refuse to admit to the Union any new State with a constitution sanctioning slavery;

further, that the people of the United States might, by regular amendment to the constitution, destroy slavery.

In 1851 Mr. Sumner, who was then forty years of age, having been born January 6th, 1811, was elected United States Senator for Massachusetts; and at first he stood at Washington almost alone in his direct pleading for abolition. In 1854, by the Kansas and Nebraska Act, a large extent of fine territory was practically thrown open for competition between free and servile labourers.

Streams of Northern men advocating free soil, and bodies of Southern men, eager to extend slave power, pressed on to the new lands. The Southerners were not, however, content to fight fairly; organised bodies of armed men entered Kansas from Missouri, and controlled the elections with bowie knife and pistol. At the first election of the Kansas Legislature, March 30th, 1855, the revolver and knife were freely used, several unoffending citizens were shot, and the abolitionists, finding themselves overpowered by force, appealed to the Government for protection. Mr. Seward presented to Congress "A Bill for the Admission of Kansas into the Union." During the debate Mr. Sumner delivered, on the 19th and 20th May, 1855, his celebrated speech, "The crime against Kansas," described by the poet Whittier as "a grand and terrible philippic." He said: "The wickedness which I now begin to expose is immeasurably aggravated by the motive which prompted it. Not in any common lust for power did this uncommon tragedy have its origin. It is the rape of a virgin territory, compelling it to the hateful embrace of slavery: and it may be clearly traced to a depraved longing for a new Slave State, the hideous offspring of such a crime, in the hope of adding to the power of slavery in the national government." With almost prophetic voice he added: "The fury of the propagandists of slavery, and the calm determination of their opponents, are now diffused from the distant territory over widespread communities, and the whole country in all its extent; marshalling hostile divisions, and foreshadowing a strife, which, unless happily averted by the triumph of freedom, will become war-fatal, fratricidal, parricidal, war—with an accumulated wickedness beyond the wickedness of any war in human annals."

The speech caused a tremendous sensation through the whole of the South. Previous to its delivery there had been many threats of personal violence against Mr. Sumner; two



days after it had been delivered Preston S. Brooks, member of the House from South Carolina, with a gold-headed gutta-percha cane in his hand, came to the seat in the Senate where Charles Sumner sat writing, and, with scarce a word of warning, struck the abolitionist orator a fearful blow, inflicting a severe wound upon the back of the head, repeating the blows until the cane was shivered to pieces, and Mr. Sumner lay bleeding and insensible on the floor of the Senate. The spirit of Southern slave-holding chivalry was well shown. Richmond and Charleston journals praised Brooks for his dastardly blow. Southern clergymen preached in his favour. South Carolina re-elected him as the representative of the State. Southern ladies bought for him a new cane, in lieu of the one which he had destroyed in his murderous onslaught on Charles Sumner. It was nearly five years before the effects of the attack had sufficiently passed away to enable the Massachusetts Senator to plead again for freedom. Perfect recovery was impossible; the shock to the nervous system had been too severe; and Mr. Sumner never ceased to feel the effect of the cowardly attack.

While travelling in Europe to recruit his health, Mr. Sumner, on the introduction of the Duchess of Argyll, had an interview with Lord Palmerston as to the repression of slavery in Cuba, the particulars of which I will give as nearly as possible in Mr. Sumner's own words: "Prompted to it by nearly the last words John Adams used to me before he died, I reminded his Lordship that his own Circular as Foreign Secretary had, in express terms, pledged any Government, in which he was influential, to an abolition policy; and urged on him that Great Britain could, if it would, at any time put an end to slavery in the island of Cuba." "How?" asked Viscount Palmerston. "By simply enforcing the treaty between Great Britain and Spain, which absolutely prohibited all importation of slaves after a fixed date, and provided that any slaves landed in Cuba in contravention of this convention, should be declared free." I added to this that "more than seven-eighths of the slave population of Cuba were under this provision entitled to their freedom." Lord Palmerston was very courteous, but did nothing.

It was in June, 1860, he spoke of "that better day, near at hand, when freedom shall be restored everywhere under the national government; when the national flag, wherever

it floats, on sea or on land, with n the national jurisdiction, will not cover a single slave ; and when the declaration of independence, now reviled in the name of slavery, will once again be revered as the American Magna Charta of human rights. Nor is this all. Such an act will be the first stage in those triumphs by which the Republic—lifted in character so as to become an example to mankind—will enter at last upon its noble prerogative of teaching the nations how to live." The story of the election of Abraham Lincoln, the huge war convulsion, the emancipation proclamation, the amendments to the constitution giving the coloured man political equality—this cannot be told here in fitting words.

Sumner is one of the few great warriors for a principle who have lived, not only to witness its emergence from unpopularity and obscurity, but have actually seen victory crown the apparently hopeless effort of their lives.

Charles Sumner, whom I first saw in the autumn of 1873, seemed to feel deeply the charge that he had acted unfairly to England in the matter of the claims arising out of the damage done to United States' commerce by the vessels built for the Southern Confederacy by Messrs. Laird. He said: "I distinguish between the English people, whom I have always regarded with the utmost friendliness, and the English Government. But put yourself in my place. Suppose civil war between Ireland and England ; suppose a Member of Congress to build war steamers at Portland under orders from those whom you called the Irish Rebels ; suppose the Government at Washington, duly warned, taking no real steps to stop the vessels ; suppose these vessels coming direct from the American port—and without ever entering an Irish port at all—being fitted with munitions of war, and burning and destroying your merchant vessels ; suppose the builder to sit in Congress, not only without censure, but receiving there constant friendly greeting, and to be treated as a friend by members of the Cabinet—what would be your feelings, Mr. Bradlaugh, as an Englishman, against the America which permitted such a wrong ?"

Charles Sumner died on March 11th, 1874 ; all America felt his loss, and Massachusetts mourned for him as though her dearest son had been taken. At his grave Curtis and Schurz vied with each other in laudations on his life. Amongst those who delivered funeral orations over Sumner

was Robert B. Elliott, Senator for South Carolina, who said : " I am a negro, one of the victim race ; " and from this oration I take the following : " Fellow citizens, the life of Charles Sumner needs no interpreter. It is an open, illumined page. The ends he aimed at were always high ; the means he used were always direct. Neither deception nor indirection, neither concealment nor disguise of any kind or degree, had place in his nature or his methods. By open means he sought open ends. He walked in the sunlight, and wrote his heart's inmost purpose on his forehead. His activity and capacity of intellectual labour were almost unequalled. Confined somewhat by the overshadowing nature of the anti-slavery cause in the range of his topics, he multiplied his blows, and re-doubled the energy of his assaults upon that great enemy of his country's peace. Here his vigour knew no bounds. He laid all ages and lands under contribution. Scholarship in all its walks—history, art, literature, science—all these he made his aids and servitors. But who does not see that *these* are not his glory ? He was a scholar amongst scholars ; an orator of consummate power ; a statesman familiar with the structure of governments and the social forces of the world. But he was greater and better than one or all of these ; he was a man of absolute moral rectitude of purpose and of life. His personal purity was perfect, and unquestioned everywhere. He carried morals into politics. And this is the greatness of Charles Sumner : that by the power of his moral enthusiasm, he rescued the nation from its shameful subservience to the demands of material and commercial interests, and guided it up to the high plane of justice and right. Above his other great qualities towers that moral greatness to which scholarship, oratory, and statesmanship are but secondary and insignificant. He was just, because he loved justice ; he was right, because he loved right. Let this be his record and epitaph."

## V.—LEDRU ROLLIN.



ALEXANDRE AUGUSTE LEDRU ROLLIN was born February 2nd, 1808, when Napoleon I. was in the height of his power. Louis Philippe—after whose flight Ledru Rollin sought from the popular suffrage the post of chief magistrate—was then thirty-five years of age. Louis Philippe at that time an exile, afterwards to be King, and then an exile once more. Poor France ! a line of Bourbon Kings ruling for centuries over starved peoples, and ending in a revolt of despair—an attempt for liberty, rendered impossible by bayonets, hired by England from every corner of Europe, and ending in centralised authority and military mania ; a one-man rule, without heart or conscience, save such as the lust for power creates, ending in a ruined France, and a Divine-right King restored to his loving people by Uhlans and Cossacks ; 1830, and the fallen successor of Louis XVIII. escorted to Cherbourg with much ceremony, Divine-right Monarchy having collapsed by its own feebleness ; then, for a little more than seventeen years, Louis Philippe Citizen King. Louis Blanc says : “ Charles X. était tombé, parceque son trône reposait sur un principe faux : Louis Philippe est tombé parceque son trône ne reposait sur aucun principe.”

Ledru Rollin, who in 1830 became a barrister, won considerable popularity as an *avocat* by his defence of various persons charged with political offences. In 1834 we find his name amongst a muster-roll of the most brilliant names of France, as one of *les défenseurs choisis par les accusés d'Avril*, and the signature of Ledru Rollin appears to a memoir, telling, in terrible language, the horrible story of the slaughterings by Monarchical authority done in the City of Paris. under the Citizen King, on April 14th, 1834.

During the period of O'Connell's great Repeal gatherings in Ireland, Ledru Rollin, who had married an Irish lady, visited his wife's native country, and, being present at one of the monster assemblages, was cheered by the Irish

peasantry as a delegate from the Republican party in France.

As Louis Philippe's power diminished, the voice of the Republican advocate made itself heard more distinctly, and his influence was felt over a larger area. At Lille, shortly prior to the end of 1847, he pictured the coming revolution, which, "like the waters of the Nile inundating the land, should sweep away the corruptions and impurities, and deposit the germs of a new and rich life." When the first of the Reform banquets was held at the Château Rouge on July 9th, 1847, Ledru Rollin refused to attend, because—although the toast of the King's health was to be omitted—he apprehended there might still be equally obnoxious toasts. On the morning of February 24th, 1848, Louis Philippe was pressed to abdicate by Emile de Girardin—always the consulting physician to dying governments; in the evening the Monarchy had ceased with the King's flight, and a Provisional Government was chosen, of which M. Alphonse de Lamartine was the nominal head, and in which Ledru Rollin became Minister of the Interior. This Government was in name Republican; but at that date no Republic was possible in France. France was not a country with innumerable municipal centres of political vitality; it was rather a huge watch, with Paris for its main-spring. Whoever controlled Paris, the army, and the telegraphs, controlled France. M. Louis Blanc, in the fourth chapter of his "*Histoire de la Révolution de 1848*," tells the story how the Republic was proclaimed. Unfortunately, Lamartine, in his own account of his acceptance of the conduct of the Provisional Government on February 24th, shows how easily a few active, earnest men in Paris named the Government which was for a brief space to replace that of Louis XV. The new Minister of the Interior is thus described by his fellow-Republican: "He was well suited to his mission, one entirely of revolutionary propaganda. Quick-witted and penetrating, a political energy tempered by frank and engaging manners, an ardent will, integrity, a vehement desire to assure the success of the Republic, and an oratorical talent of the first class. These were the qualities which Ledru Rollin brought to the accomplishment of his functions, and they were heightened in him by a handsome figure, an imposing stature, and an indescribable magnetism, which, when he spoke seemed to pervade each of his

gestures." Lord Normanby, an English ambassador, in his "A Year of Revolution in Paris," thought it right to libel Ledru Rollin, just as former English ambassadors had libelled the men of 1789. Unfortunately for Lord Normanby, and happily for the truth, he published his libels to the world, and there were more newspapers to criticise, and more readers to judge, in 1848 than in the period when Louis XVI. reigned.

On March 5th, by a decree of the Provisional Government, universal suffrage was declared to be the law of France. The law was right; but it should have been demanded by the nation, and voted by the national representatives; the men to whom it was freely given were, in the majority of instances, unable to properly value the right they gained unsought.

Ledru Rollin has been severely assailed on account of an official circular issued just prior to the elections, and addressed to the Commissioners, who acted as his provincial subordinates, directing them to replace the various *préfets*, *sous préfets*, and other officials, with persons avowing Republican opinions, and declaring that "all political functions ought to be allotted to men of sure and of Republican principles." Undoubtedly, both Ledru Rollin and Louis Blanc felt justified in using on behalf of Republicanism the centralised authority which had been so long used against it. As a Republican, the exercise of any pressure on the voters was unjustifiable; especially was it unjustifiable when, on April 15th, Ledru Rollin permitted his bulletin newspaper to suggest that, if the result of the elections should prove adverse to Republicanism, a second appeal to the barricades would be necessary on the part of the Parisian populace. A Republican is bound to submit to the vote of a majority, even if that vote annihilates the Republic. An appeal to force is an appeal to the past; it justifies the conduct of the strongest. When some of the regiments of the National Guards were permitted, if not encouraged, to exact from the officers they were electing a pledge, "that in the event of the new Assembly declaring against a Republic, they would march against the Assembly, and put it down," every teaching of Republicanism was outraged.

A few weeks later, Ledru Rollin, as a member of the Executive Commission, found himself obliged to submit to his colleagues, who gave authorisation to Gen. Cavaignac to

use force when the people at the barricades appealed against the decision of the Assembly hostile to the further existence of the Ateliers Nationaux. The bloody days of June were the result of this appeal, and all hope of present Republic was dead. After Ledru Rollin's retirement from the Ministry, he was for a short time *chef du Cabinet* to the Préfet of the Seine; but a strong attack was made upon him, and his popularity became seriously weakened. He was, nevertheless, elected in April, 1849, for Paris, with 129,000 votes.

On June 13th, 1849, Ledru Rollin made an earnest, but ineffectual, appeal in the Assembly against the murder of the Roman Republic by the French army under General Oudinot. The story is told by Joseph Mazzini, how clericalism in France triumphed in inducing the soldiers of one Republic, only just born, to crush the efforts of another Republic struggling into birth.

Forced to quit France, Ledru Rollin was an exile from his native country for twenty-one years. In 1857 he, then in England, was judged *par contumace* for alleged complicity in the attempt by Felice Orsini against the life of Louis Napoleon, but the charge was utterly unfounded, and was probably never even believed by the French police. The only pretence for the use of Ledru Rollin's name in the matter seems to have been that Charles Delécluze, who had established some political associations in France, was known to be in correspondence with the exile; but there was not even a shadow of complicity between Delécluze and Ledru Rollin.

It was in 1857 that I first saw Ledru Rollin, who often consulted me on points of English law during the time of his subsequent residence in St. John's Wood. On one point he was entirely in error: he judged France to be always as he left it in 1849, and was bitterly dis-illusioned when, on his return to Paris in 1870, he found a new generation had grown up with new ideas.

The life of an exile is not a very happy one; the sketch of the career of Joseph Mazzini illustrates this. Ledru Rollin, in his "Decadence de l'Angleterre," says: "Proscribed, we bore with us the sacred right of misfortune, which even amongst barbarians was regarded as a kind of public religion. How has it been respected? We have been each day submitted to insult; the English aristocracy has drawn us about on its journalistic hurdles, denouncing

us to its people as convicts escaped from the galleys, as miserable bandits, as the refuse of the sewers of Paris." Ledru Rollin endured exile for nearly twenty-one years.

In 1870, now with whitened hair, and with his heart withered by the exile chill, Ledru Rollin once more returned to his home at Fontenay aux Roses, and was in 1871 chosen by three departments as deputy to the French Assembly, where, however, he at that time declined to sit. A Republican Society in Paris, the Alliance Républicaine, nominated Ledru Rollin as its President; but the hero of 1848 does not seem to have ever regained his old power in Paris.

At his funeral an enormous mass of Parisians gathered. His career had been honest, his devotion had been sincere. While the Empire lasted he had refused it allegiance; he had been loyal to France.

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THE lives of Owen, Mazzini, Mill, Sumner, and Ledru Rollin, present several features of likeness. To the whole of these men the clergy were bitterly hostile, for each of them was an apostle of at least some chapter of the gospel of progress. The Welshman, Robert Owen, who taught the communism imperfectly shadowed out by Jesus and his Apostles, was denounced, with more than ordinary fierceness, from nearly every pulpit in England, the Bishop of Exeter encouraging the cry from his place in the House of Lords. The Italian, Joseph Mazzini, the greatest modern preacher of Republicanism, was excommunicated by the Pope, head of a Church always hostile to liberty, and the Italian patriot was anathematised by almost the whole of the Roman Catholic priesthood. The Englishman, John Stuart Mill, had scarcely been lowered into the grave, at Avignon, when the weak-brained and orthodox *Church Herald* yelled out its curses against the scarce-cold form of one who will always rank amongst the chief of Europe's thinkers; when John Stuart Mill was invited by the electors of Westminster to allow himself to be their candidate for election to Parliament, the cry of "heretic" was loudly raised by all sects of Christian preachers, and a



Liberal dignity in the Church was bitterly assailed because he cast his ballot for the great logician. The New Englander, Charles Sumner, the Abolitionist, was preached against alike from Northern and Southern pulpits; the unfeeling pleading of the Massachusetts barrister, on behalf of dark-skinned humanity, was impartially scorned by the sects who pretended to kneel to a common father: and last, though hardly least, in the value of its testimony, the Frenchman, Ledru Rollin's grave—surrounded by the many thousands of men and women who came to honour his civil burial—marked once more the hostility between progress and the Church.

Robert Owen, though he himself died poor, having devoted to popular redemption the fortune he had created, yet lived to see thousands lifted at least a little from their poverty by the practical co-operative efforts which gradually, and after many trials, grew out of his Socialistic theories. The glory of the experiment in infant education, which he first pressed at New Lanark, was, before he died, claimed by the very religious teachers who had so long hindered all education, and who must in time be destroyed by the rescue of children's brains from the control of priestly manipulators. Joseph Mazzini did not die until his much-loved Rome had been proclaimed the capital of Italy, and—though generations of education in liberty and self-reliance will be required to efface the trace of the Divine Bourbon in Naples and in Sicily—yet the lone man's life was not without its fruitful harvest. John Stuart Mill, dying ere his strength was spent, had nevertheless found himself recognised as the thought-maker of his people. Charles Sumner, who had spoken for freedom when angry and brutal men pointed revolvers in his face; who had continued to speak for abolition when the whole continent of America cried out that the speaking was hopeless; who had fallen in the Capitol—at the close of a grand speech against slavery—bathed in his own blood, shed by a felon hand; Charles Sumner lived to see his speech grow into law. And even Ledru Rollin survived long enough to see the Imperial sham fade away, and to hear the very peasantry of France utter their yearning cry for the Republicanism to which he had devoted himself.

It will not be until another age that full justice will, or can, be awarded to the memories of these men. Statues and monuments are readily erected to princes pensioned

for the merit accruing from accident of birth, or fortune of marriage ; memorial stones are easily found to record great wealth and huge rent-rolls. For the dead who lived for the poor, and died in poverty ; for the dead who struggled for freedom, and died worn out in the effort to burst the shackles theretofore worn by others ; for the dead who, living, were not known by fashion, nor honoured by wealth ; for these the monuments can only be slowly raised, as a new generation inherits, without obstacle, the prizes of social advancement and political freedom, which these dead won with bleeding hearts and wearied brains.





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